REMARKS

Claims 1-35 are pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1, 2, and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,813,717 to Watts ("Watts").

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,265,065 B1 to McCallion ("McCallion").

Claims 16-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watts in view U.S. Patent No. 5,406,983 to Chambers et al ("Chambers et al").

Claims 8-15, and 26 are allowed.

Claims 30-35 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

To date, no Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review has been received. Applicant respectfully requests receipt of this document when it becomes available.

Claims 1-7 have been cancelled. Claims 16, 18, 20, and 23 have been amended to depend from allowed claim 8. Claims 27, 32, 34 have been amended to place them in independent form. Claim 30 has been amended to depend from claim 34. Claims 28-35 have been amended to correct a clerical error in their preambles. These changes do not introduce any new matter.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and (e) Rejections

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Watts and the rejection of claims 1, 3, and 4 under

35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by McCallion are mooted by the cancellation of the subject claims.

With respect to claim 27, the Office Action indicated claim 30 was allowable if it was rewritten in independent format including the limitations of is base classes. Because claim 30 depended from claim 27, amending claim 27 to include the subject matter of claim 30 is equivalent to amending claim 30 to put it in independent format. Claim 27 has been so amended. Accordingly, amended claim 27 is allowable over the art of record.

With respect to claims 28-29, it is respectfully submitted that these claims depend from claim 27 and are therefore also allowable over the art of record.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 16-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Watts in view of Chambers et al, is mooted by the amendment of claims 16, 18, 20, and 23 so that they depend from allowed claim 8.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicated that claims 8-15 and 26 are allowed, and that claims 30-35 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As provided herein above, claim 27 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 30, which is equivalent to amending claim 30 to put it in independent format. Accordingly, amended claim 27 is allowable.

Claims 32 and 34 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of base claim 27. Accordingly, claims 32 and 34 are allowable over the art of record.

Claims 28-31, 33, and 35 depend from allowable base claims. Therefore claims 28-31, 33, and 35 are also allowable.

Accordingly, claims 8-15 and 26-35 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application, including claims 8-35, is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment increases the number of independent claims by 1 from 5 to 6, but does not increases the total number of claims, and does not present any multiple dependant claims. Accordingly, a Response Transmittal and Fee Authorization form authorizing the amount of $88.00 to be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260 is enclosed herewith in duplicate. However, if the Response Transmittal and Fee Authorization form is missing, insufficient, or otherwise inadequate, or if a fee, other than the issue fee, is required during the pendency of this application, please charge such fee to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260.

Any fee required by this document other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee,

and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Michael J. DeHaemer
Registration No. 39,164
Attorney for Applicant

MJD/llb:bar
SIDLEY AUSTIN BROWN & WOOD LLP
717 N. Harwood, Suite 3400
Dallas, Texas 75201
Direct: (214) 981-3335
Main: (214) 981-3300
Facsimile: (214) 981-3400
November 3, 2004

DA1 305917v.4